

“Near Joy”

Philippians 4:4-7

(Pastor Bryan Chapell 3-5-17)

Connect:

- 1) As you think back over your life, what things or situations caused you to seek God in prayer?

Discuss:

- 1) Read Phil 4:4-7. What words or phrases make it clear that God cares deeply about our personal situation and needs?
- 2) Paul tells us in v. 4 to ‘Rejoice in the Lord’. What is the significance of the phrase ‘in the Lord’ and how does it relate to rejoicing ‘always’?
- 3) What is the difference between joy and happiness? How do we get joy? How does joy relate to:
 - a. Being reasonable (5a)?
 - b. Not being anxious (6a)?
- 4) Why would we be encouraged (even commanded) to pray about everything? (v. 6) What are some “everythings” that you should be praying for but haven’t in the past? (Consider Heb 4:14-16; Matt 7:7-11)
- 5) Why is the attitude of thanksgiving so important as we pray (v. 6)?
- 6) God’s peace comes as a result of trusting God with everything that we have. (v.7; Note also Ps. 127:1-2)
 - a. How does this peace ‘surpass all understanding’?
 - b. How does this peace ‘guard our hearts and minds’? (Remember Kenneth Bae letter to Pastor Bryan)

Partner:

- 1) As you consider this passage and the discussion we’ve just had, what is the Spirit of God impressing on your heart regarding this passage and prayer? Write those things down and ask God to graciously lead you in that direction this week. Then pray for each other.
- 2) Consider reading the attached hymn as a group;
- 3) Memorize this passage as a group or with your prayer partner.

What a friend we have in Jesus,
All our sins and griefs to bear!
What a privilege to carry
Everything to God in prayer!
Oh, what peace we often forfeit,
Oh, what needless pain we bear,
All because we do not carry
Everything to God in prayer!

Have we trials and temptations?
Is there trouble anywhere?
We should never be discouraged—
Take it to the Lord in prayer.
Can we find a friend so faithful,
Who will all our sorrows share?
Jesus knows our every weakness;
Take it to the Lord in prayer.

Are we weak and heavy-laden,
Cumbered with a load of care?
Precious Savior, still our refuge—
Take it to the Lord in prayer.
Do thy friends despise, forsake thee?
Take it to the Lord in prayer!
In His arms He'll take and shield thee,
Thou wilt find a solace there.

Blessed Savior, Thou hast promised
Thou wilt all our burdens bear;
May we ever, Lord, be bringing
All to Thee in earnest prayer.
Soon in glory bright, unclouded,
There will be no need for prayer—
Rapture, praise, and endless worship
Will be our sweet portion there.